

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
COMMISSIONER'S HEARING ROOM, COUPEVILLE, WA  
TUESDAY, February 11, 2014**

	<i>Members Present</i>	<i>Members Absent</i>
<i>District 1</i>	<i>Val Hillers – Vice Chair</i>	
	<i>Dean Enell</i>	
	<i>Mike Joselyn – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair</i>	
<i>District 2</i>	<i>Jeffery Wallin</i>	
		<i>Vacant</i>
		<i>Leal Dickson</i>
<i>District 3</i>		<i>Wayne Havens – Chair</i>
	<i>Beth Munson</i>	
	<i>Scott Yonkman</i>	

Meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Vice Chair Hillers.

**ROLL CALL**

Mike Joselyn, Val Hillers, Dean Enell, Scott Yonkman, Jeffery Wallin

**Minutes:**

None

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2014**

*Vice Chair Hillers called for nominations for Chair for 2014:*

*Commissioner Enell nominated Val Hillers, Commissioner Yonkman seconded. Commissioner Joselyn moved to close the nominations. Chair Hillers called for a vote; motion carried unanimously.*

*Chair Hillers called for nominations for Vice Chair.*

*Commissioner Yonkman nominated Mike Joselyn, Commissioner Wallin seconded, motion carried unanimously.*

Planning staff present: David Wechner – Planning Director, Will Simpson – Long Range Planner, Brad Johnson – Long Range Planner

**ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Garrett Newkirk – North Whidbey Island Resident

Discussed the APZ zoning approval.

- Feels this has decimated North Whidbey Island.
- Military testing
- Noise pollution

- Need for military to follow Washington State Law.
- There should be no weapon testing.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

None

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Public Hearing** – Presentation on regional growth trends and recommendation on the allocation of the 2036 countywide population projection.

Brad Johnson presented the findings in the ongoing process to update the Comprehensive Plan.

Will Simpson began the presentation to the Planning Commission.

The following documents were provided at this meeting:

Memo to Planning Commission

Regional Allocations- Presentation to IC PC

Issue Paper – 5 – Final Draft Formally Transmitted to PC

Findings of Fact-Allocation of 2036 Population

## **Outline**

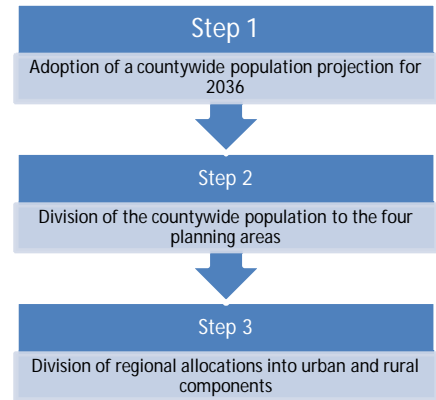
- Purpose
- Methodology
- Background/Previous Efforts
- North Whidbey Planning Area
- Central Whidbey Planning Area
- South Whidbey Planning Area
- Camano Island Planning Area
- Conclusions & Recommendation
- Next Steps

### **Purpose**

- Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) must accommodate 20 years of population and job growth (RCW 36.70A.110 & WAC 365-196-310)
- Island County is responsible for assessing the twenty-year population forecast and ensuring UGAs are adequately sized to accommodate anticipated growth
- Municipalities within Island County need localized population forecasts to move forward on their respective Comprehensive Plan reviews
- Freeland Water and Sewer District needs revised population figures to complete internal planning activities
- Island County is divided into four Planning Areas because of unique characteristics in each area

## Methodology

- Step 1 completed with unanimous support from the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners (Resolution C-76-13)
- Regional allocation process completes Step 2 and establishes a baseline split of urban and rural population
- Buildable lands analysis, transportation modeling, and research on resource constraints will help determine if adjustments to the baseline UGA allocations are needed



### Previous Efforts: 1998

Projections and Allocations from 1998 Comprehensive Plan						
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
North Whidbey	15,600	25,500	34,200	41,800	49,000	57,500
Central Whidbey	4,200	6,100	8,000	10,500	12,000	14,000
South Whidbey	4,500	7,300	10,000	15,900	20,700	26,000
Camano	2,600	5,100	8,000	13,300	17,000	21,300
Total	<b>26,900</b>	<b>44,000</b>	<b>60,200</b>	<b>81,500</b>	<b>98,700</b>	<b>118,800</b>

- Island County adopted our first GMA compliant comprehensive plan in 1998
- Elected to use the OFM, Office of Financial Management, high series population estimate
- Allocated population to each planning area using a proportional share method

Commissioner Hillers asked if the County has the numbers of full time and part time residents.

Commissioner Enell asked if the GMA has a process/methodology to calculate the growth considering Island County's unique situation.

Brad responded that the GMA does not address it and there is not much methodology provided at the state level. He further discussed seasonal residents and its decline.

### Previous Efforts: 2005

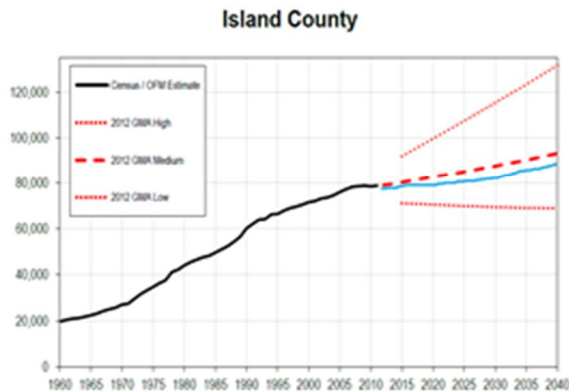
- Revised the countywide population estimate using a midpoint between OFM high and medium series projections
- Developed a range between historic proportional shares of population and growth rates (based on permit data).

- Allocations in 2005 were significantly more accurate
- Accuracy largely influenced by a more realistic countywide population estimate

### Past Allocations and Census Counts

Comparison of Past Allocations with Census Counts						
	2000 Allocation	2000 Census	Difference	2010 Allocation	2010 Census	Difference
North Whidbey						
1998 – <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>	41,800	34,737	-7,063 (-20%)	49,900	36,757	-13,143 (-36%)
2005 – <i>Proportional Share</i>	*	*	*	40,551	36,757	-3,794 (-10%)
2005 – <i>Growth Rate</i>	*	*	*	40,642	36,757	-3,885 (-11%)
Central Whidbey						
1998 – <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>	10,500	9,467	-1,033 (-11%)	12,000	12,458	+458 (4%)
2005 - <i>Proportional Share</i>	*	*	*	10,138	12,458	+2,320 (19%)
2005 – <i>Growth Rate</i>	*	*	*	10,605	12,458	+1,853 (15%)
South Whidbey						
1998 – <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>	15,900	14,007	-1,893 (-14%)	20,700	13,630	-7,070 (-52%)
2005 - <i>Proportional Share</i>	*	*	*	17,741	13,630	-4,111 (- 30%)
2005 - <i>Growth Rate</i>	*	*	*	16,948	13,630	-3318 (-19.6%)
Camano Island						
1998 – <i>Comprehensive Plan</i>	13,300	13,347	+47 (.03%)	17,000	15,661	-1,339 (-9%)
2005 - <i>Proportional Share</i>	*	*	*	16,051	15,661	-390 (-2%)
2005 – <i>Growth Rate</i>	*	*	*	16,283	15,661	-622 (-4%)

## Current Forecasting: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Review and Update

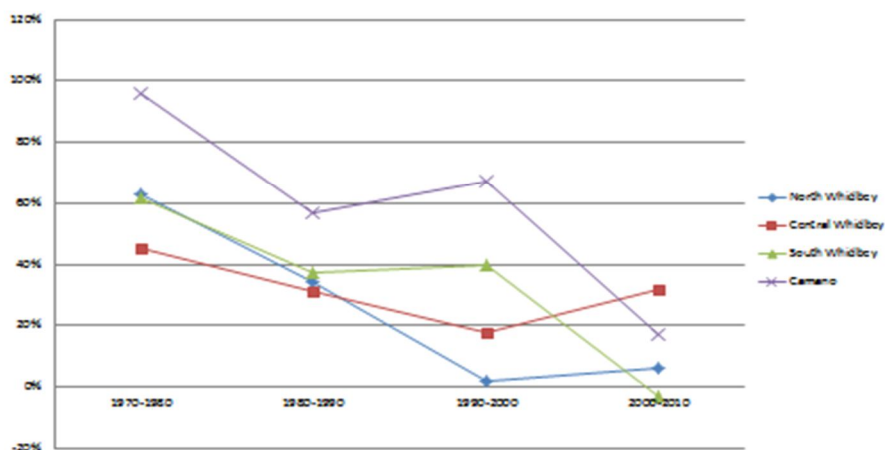


- Expected population of 87, 917 by 2036
- Initial forecast: One quartile below medium series (6,881 by 2036)
- Made adjustment based on expected personnel at NAS Whidbey (added 2,530)
- Reviewed historical trends, transportation data, and regional employment data

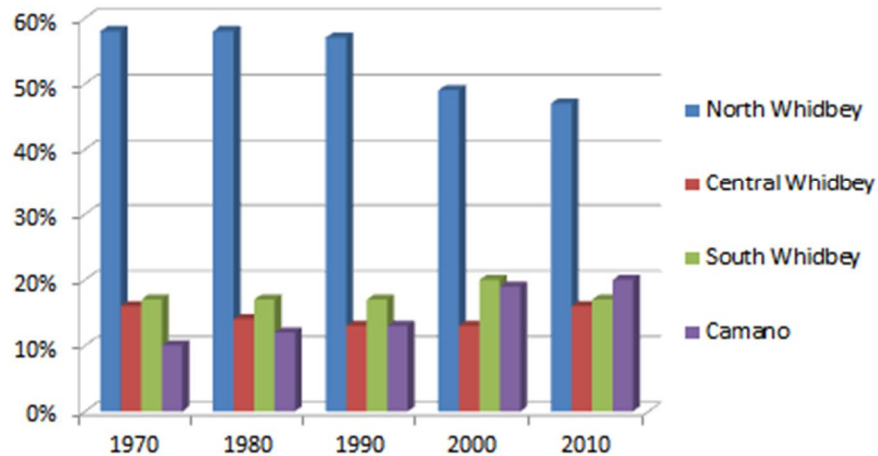
### Island County Planning Areas

- North Whidbey
- Central Whidbey
- South Whidbey
- Camano Island

### Growth Rates by Planning Area: 1970-2010



## Percentage of Island County Population by Planning Area: 1970-2010

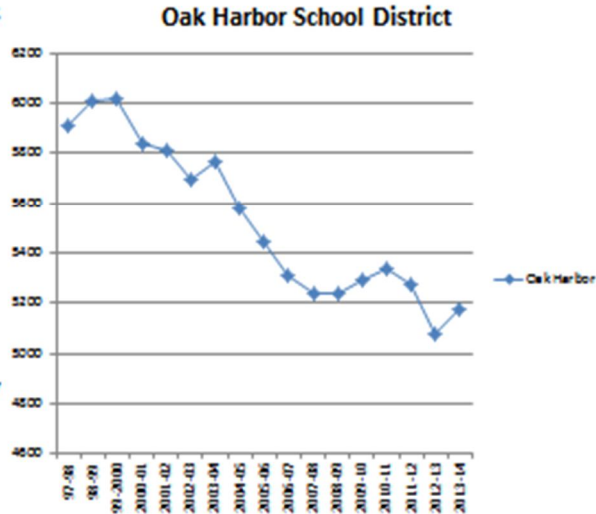


### North Whidbey Planning Area

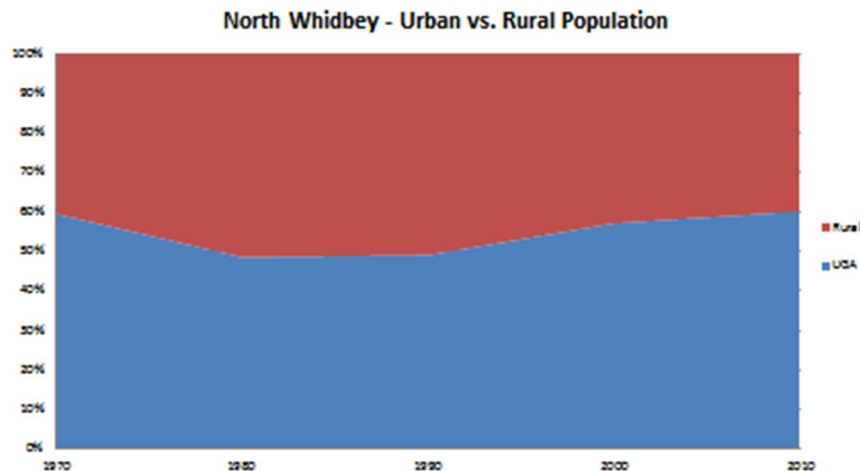
- Growth and development heavily influenced by Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey
- Nearly 88% of the economic activity in Island County is directly or indirectly linked to NAS Whidbey (OFM, 2004)
- Future growth will directly correspond with new personnel at NAS Whidbey
- Employment opportunities in Skagit County may have a slight influence on population growth
- Lowest median age in Island County – 31.3 years old (US Census, ACS)
- North Whidbey will have the highest Total Fertility Rate (TFR), and growth resulting from natural increase, over the next 20 year planning period

## North Whidbey School Enrollment: 1997-2013

- School district boundaries correspond closely with Whidbey Island Planning Areas
- Provides additional context on local demographic trends
- Decline of 12.4% between 1997 and 2013 – the smallest decline as a percentage of all Whidbey Island School Districts



## North Whidbey Planning Area 1970-2010

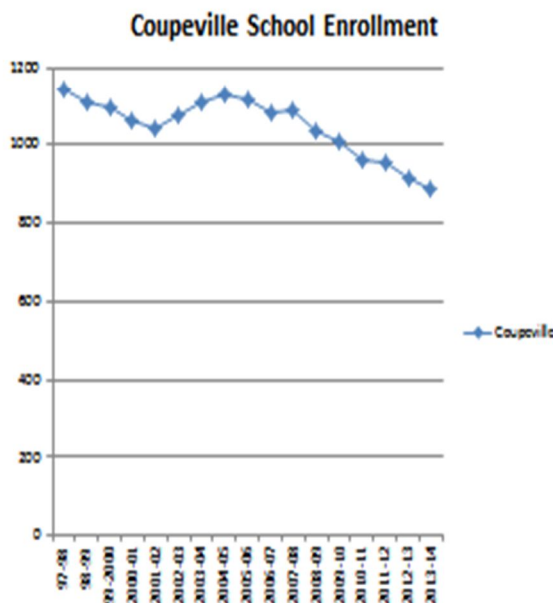


## Central Whidbey Planning Area

- Least populated Planning Area
- Growth rates are historically lower than other Planning Areas, but have declined less and recovered faster
- Not within reasonable commute distance to regional job centers in Skagit, Snohomish, or King County
- Census data do not indicate significant commuters to Port Townsend or Jefferson County
- Population growth likely driven by retirees, commuters to Oak Harbor, and employment changes at Island County & Whidbey General

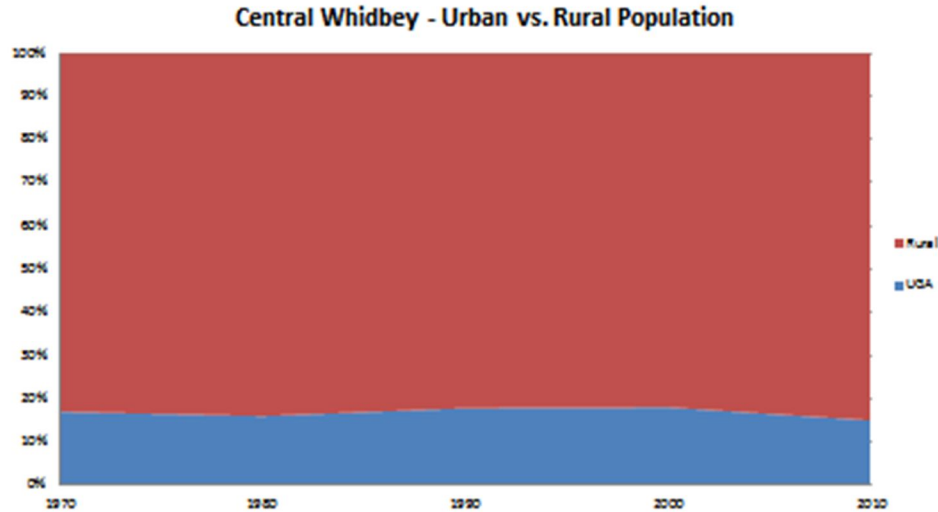
## Central Whidbey School Enrollment and Demographics

- Median age of 53.6  
(highest in Island  
County)
- Natural increase will  
have a smaller impact  
on population in  
comparison to North  
Whidbey
- School enrollment  
declined by 21.9%  
from 1997-2013





# Central Whidbey Planning Area 1970-2010



## South Whidbey Planning Area

- High rates of historical growth (1970-2000), with a sharp decline from 2000-2010 (-3%)
- Historical growth likely driven by working-age commuters and retirees
- Employment opportunities in the Puget Sound will continue to influence population growth
- Rising transportation costs and changing market preferences may also impact future growth
- Difficult to predict future growth, but if high growth rates return we can adjust accordingly during the next Comprehensive Plan update

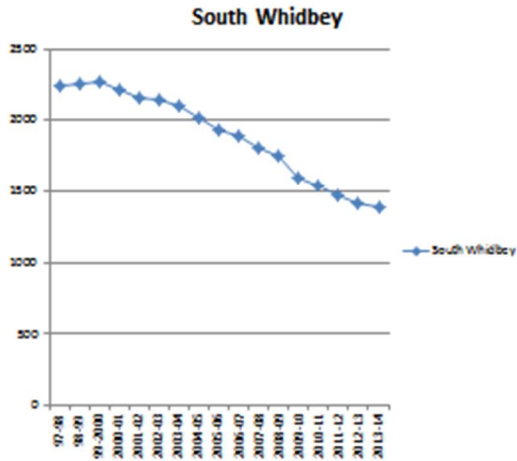
## South Whidbey Planning Area:

### Transportation and Regional Employment

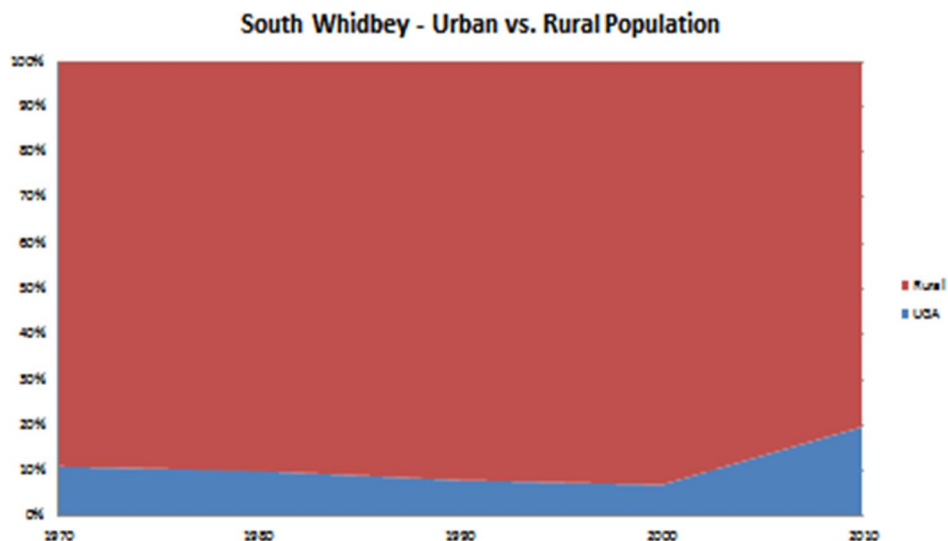
- Population and commuting trends largely influenced by regional job growth
- Projected job increase of 45% (NW King County) and 37% (W. Snohomish County) by 2040
- Regional job growth must be balanced with increasing commute times and traffic congestion
- Analyzed WSDOT data on trip origins and destinations for the Clinton – Mukilteo Ferry
- 1999-2006: 43% passenger fare increase, 39% vehicle fare increase
- 2006: 22% of ferry commuters telecommute at least once a week
- WSDOT anticipates a 2.5% increase in ferry fares per year
- Reliable transit connections in Mukilteo are key to promoting growth

## South Whidbey School Enrollment and Demographics

- Median age of 52.7
- School enrollment declined by 38% between 1997 and 2013
- State and Census data indicate an out-migration of families with children under 15
- 13% of S. Whidbey population is under the age of 14
- 25% of S. Whidbey population is between the ages of 15 and 44



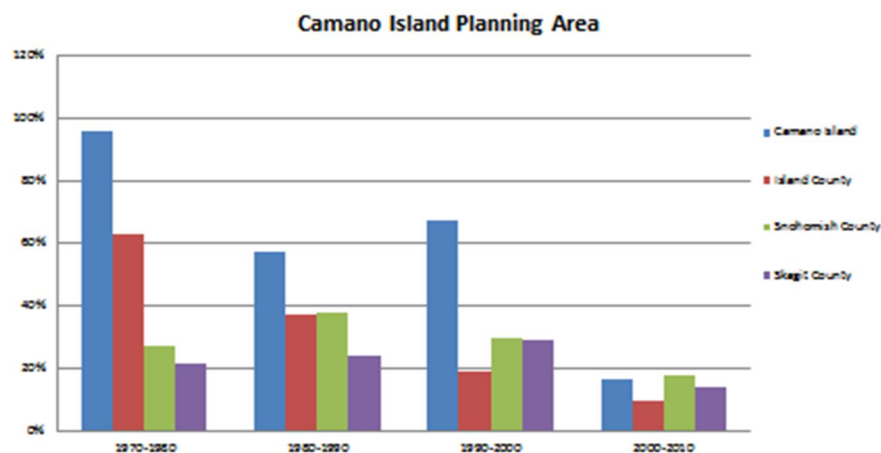
## South Whidbey Planning Area 1970-2010



## Camano Island Planning Area

- Consistently experienced high rates of growth since 1970
- Proximity to I-5 corridor, a large supply of small rural lots, view parcels, and waterfront development sites at affordable prices have facilitated growth
- Exhaustion of low-cost, amenity rich development sites will likely lead to reduced growth rates in the future
- Median age = 49.7 and 25% of the population aged 15-44
- School enrollment statistics not analyzed – district boundaries include Stanwood
- No UGAs present, but Buildable Lands Analysis will address Rural Areas of Intense Development (RAIDs) on Camano Island in more detail

## Camano Island Planning Area: Growth Rate Comparison



## Camano Island Planning Area: Commute Times and Destinations

Estimated Camano Commute Times			
From	To	Miles	Time (minutes)
Camano Island	Marysville	29	36
	Arlington	23	33
	Mt. Vernon	22	36
	Burlington	26	43
	Anacortes	38	58
	Bayview (UGA)	30	47
	Stanwood	14	10
	Everett	35	43
	Seattle	63	1 hr. 11 min.
	Bellevue	63	1 hr. 11 min.

- Planning Area primarily composed of Rural and Rural Residential land uses
- Existing commercial centers serve local residents
- Avg. commute time is 42 min.
- Future growth in Skagit and Snohomish County will continue to influence residential growth on Camano Island

## Conclusions and Recommendation

- Demographic conditions have changed, but the distribution of population has remained remarkably stable over the past 40 years
- Expansions at NAS Whidbey will heavily influence population and employment growth in the future
- Job growth in Snohomish, King, and Skagit County will continue to impact population in South Whidbey and on Camano Island
- Additional analysis on land capacity in the unincorporated areas, along with infrastructure and resource constraints, will determine if adjustments need to be made to baseline UGA allocations

## Conclusions and Recommendation: Regional Allocations

- Subtract anticipated population related to NAS Whidbey expansion before using the proportional share method
- Allocate population to Planning Areas based on an average share of growth from 1970–2010, and use the proportional share methodology to establish a baseline for UGA allocations
- Add anticipated NAS Whidbey population to North Whidbey
- Evaluate population trends in 2020 and be prepared to adjust population figures during the next Comp Plan update

### Recommended Allocations

Planning Area	Allocation of the 2036 Projection (-2,530)
North Whidbey	53.8% (+2,530)
Central Whidbey	14.4%
South Whidbey	17.6%
Camano Island	14.8%

## Next Steps

- Forward Planning Commission's recommendation on regional allocations to the Board of County Commissioners
- Present a Resolution for the Board's consideration to formally establish regional allocations for the 2016 Comp Plan update
- Coordinate with the Intergovernmental Working Group on a Buildable Lands Analysis for Island County
- Present findings on land capacity for RAIDS, unincorporated areas, and UGAs to Planning Commission and County Commissioners
- Determine if adjustments should be made to baseline UGA allocations

Commissioner Hillers asked clarification on the method of the recommended allocations.

Commissioner Enell wanted compliment the planners did a great job on the presentation. He also wanted to address transportation affecting population growth. Stated there is a new ferry station being opened and would allow for more commuters on the island and transportation would be less of an issue for commuters going off the island. He also asked regarding the Rural and UGA split and how it is influenced by the GMA.

Brad answered that in respect to the Urban Rural split the county goal is 50 percent County wide. The numbers presented are just a base line of historic trend. Much of the population growth is not a result of a need it is a choice to move to a rural location. There is definitely an opportunity to increase the percentage but there is a need to be reasonable when looking at the goal.

Will Simpson stated that the 50% goal was looking at the entire county. When the numbers are brought on graph it does not include the urban growth areas. He further explained once the buildable analysis is done that would explain and further breakdown.

Commissioner Enell thinks should be a higher goal than just 19% in the South Whidbey demographics regardless of the whole County and feels they should have a goal similar to the north area.

Commissioner Yonkman stated that the allocations do make a lot of sense, and asked if there are any negatives to the method being used that is not being seen.

Brad responded that if you looked at this strictly in a rational manner, relocating people around where services are located only works on paper. It is simpler to alter the size of population in urban growth areas in that are located in larger counties.

Commissioner Wallin asked if the other areas have accepted the numbers being presented today.

Will Simpson stated that they have not received any comments and just received a letter from City of Oak Harbor in support of the methodology.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Garrett Newkirk, North Whidbey

Commented that the North Whidbey numbers are not correct and are not taking into consideration:

- Allowing the military is causing negative impacts to the Island.
- Tax decrease.
- Actual full time resident moving out of area.
- Number of military living on federal reservations.
- Loss of business.
- Real estate for sale.

- Noise pollution driving seasonal residents off the Island.
- Has the Planning Dept. researched how many properties are up for sale?

Commissioner Joslyn stated that the issue is not unique to Oak Harbor; the South end also has been impacted by the loss of businesses. There is a recession and that is affecting everyone.

Commissioner Enell stated that he would be very interested to know how many places are listed for sale. He asked Mr. Newkirk to bring in the information.

Mr. Newkirk stated it was expensive to access the MLS database and bring the information.

Lou Malzone, Water and Sewer District Commissioner in Freeland

They are currently trying to move forward with the sewer plant. There is a feasibility study being done to modify the comprehensive sewer plan in order to create the second amendment to the comprehensive sewer plan.

- Discussed the history of the first amendment to the comprehensive sewer plan.
- They are trying to work with agencies and come up with amendment #2 and look at phasing the project and be smaller than the original plan in 2005.
- Location of the treated water which is more local.
- Trying to protect the grant that expires in 2015 from Department of Ecology (DOE).
- They have not talked to the property owners yet in the potential downsize phase 1 until the feasibility study is complete.
- Discussed nitrate build up in Freeland over time the wells are being affected.

Commissioner Enell asked if they get amendment number 2 done by the end of this year would that preserve their grant.

Ron Nelson, Island County Economic Development Council

Complimented Brad and Will on the work being done on the analysis.

- Concern about economic diversification.
- Increase of retirement communities.
- Increase of low paying employment.
- Higher need for services.
- Light manufacturing and professional services.
- Need to make sure to have properties available in Island County to cater to light manufacturing and professional services.
- Road to the airport in south Whidbey.
- Camano Island should take advantage the fact they have access to the mainland.

Commissioner Munson asked if labor participation ratios were included in the process and was it considered to be a moot point in Island County.

Will responded that Public Works is moving forward on updates to the transportation updates are specifically looking at employment opportunities in the forecast. Some of that information is available on the Public Works website.

Brad stated that the labor participation is important and Public Works is taking a look at population and transportation.

*Commissioner Enell moved to approve the Findings of Facts, Commissioner Wallin seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.*

### **Public Meeting – Workshop on I-502 implementation.**

Planning Commission workshops are not meant for a Public Forum. Planning workshops are to inform and familiarize members with issues coming before them and provide an opportunity to exchange ideas. Planning Commission workshops are open to the public to attend, but are not generally an opportunity for public testimony.

Commissioner Hillers allowed for public comment.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jim Deanne, Represents Canna Northwest, LLC, Camano Island  
Wanted to attend to offer any clarification or expertise on what their objective is.

- Provided his experience in law enforcement.
- Has submitted an application to the Liquor Control Board (LCB).

Dave Wechner presented a redacted application from the Liquor Control Board.

- Discussed the internal process of the application
  - Verify the address is valid.
  - Sheriff does a local check this is not a background check.
  - Verify zoning designation.
  - About 85% of the applications are in the Rural Zone.
  - Respond to Liquor Control Board.
- Background checks are done by LCB at a federal level.
- Production and process can occur on the same site but retail has to be separate and is stated in the WAC.

Director Wechner presented and provided the SEPA Determination /Checklist and discussed the process of the determination and Public Hearing on March 11, 2014. He also gave the timeframes of process and appeals through the different agencies. Will be meeting with the board on February 12, 2014 and will bring any comments to them.

- Department of Commerce also has to do their review if it requires a Comprehensive Plan change that will also have to be reviewed.
- Explained the SEPA Checklist to the Planning Commissioners.

- Treat this in the Land Use Development Standards, Chapter 17.03.180.BB, will be a new section of the County Code.
- Not all zones have specific prohibited uses.
- Discussed how to locate the specific uses for zonings.
- Prohibited in Rural Residential Zone.
- Rural Zone 17.03.060 is the most popular zone.
- Discussion of difference between Rural and Rural Residential.
- Included Oak Harbor to be consistent with their zoning designations.
- Light manufacturing zones are very limited.
- Airport zone has been included as well; there can be a security issue.
- Discussed the labor force impacts.
- Health Department involvement and reviews involving waste and water pollution.
- Expects to have the SEPA determination by next week.

Director Wechner provided the proposed ordinance to address I-502.

- Separated producers, processors and retailers into three sections in this subsection since the Liquor Control Board separates them in this order.
- Type processing is used by Island County and requirements for each type of application.
- Type I application does not allow for much flexibility.
- Type II application can be conditioned.
- Type III application is more restrictive and a longer process.

Commissioner Enell asked if a person applies for an application and meets the 50 foot setback would they be required to screen.

David Wechner said that the barn itself would be screening but the loading and unloading areas would require screening.

- Commissioners agree building provides screening.
- Eight foot wall/fence screening required for an outdoor production.

Discussion of screening requirements and what the standards should be for indoor or outdoor grows.

- Board has a concern on the esthetics impacts.
- Should outdoor growing be allowed?

Jim Deanne stated that it was possible to grow the crop outdoors in Western Washington seasonal. It does add value but poses security issues.

- 7 foot fences require a building permit.
- Ebey's Reserve has restrictions and security fences would be a problem in that area.
- Is there a prescriptive for fences?
- What does screening mean? Location of fence.



- Board of Commissioners wanted to discourage producing and processing in the Ebey's Historical Reserve.
- Page 9 of SEPA limits the use of marijuana, should it say something else other than uses? Correction will be made to refer to it as land uses.
- Discussed and agreed that areas near the Oak Harbor area should also be held to City of Oak Harbor standards.

Commissioner Enell was concerned with not allowing a marijuana grow under home occupation.

David Wechner responded that the restriction comes directly from WAC and it cannot be ignored. The business may not be conducted from the home.

Commissioner Yonkman stated he felt the 50 foot minimum setback seems extreme.

Mr. Wechner responded he used the 50 foot setback due to security lighting. He would like to be able to see plot plans on the applications in order to be able to determine the setback requirements. With the LCB applications a plot plan is not required and it makes it difficult to determine where the setbacks are.

- Would be prudent to do site visit for a type I application.
- Require a plot plan on a Type I and site plan for a Type II.
- Proposed 30 ft. for existing buildings.
- Security lighting reference in the WAC.

#### Marijuana Processors

- The dimensions of the parcels are to be taken into consideration vs the size of the parcel.
- WAC 314.55.104 discusses processor licensing extraction requirements are limited to solvents, gases and mediums. Building code gives an exempt amount of hazardous materials and if over that exempt amount, would be put in a higher class.
- Change the language to subsection 1.
- Parking standards.
- Landscape, lighting and screening design and guidelines.
- Maintaining existing character of any surrounding permitted uses.

#### Marijuana Retailers

- Required to be processed as a Type II Site Plan Review.
- Written notification to property owners within 250 feet.
- Setbacks: retail impacts, existing/new buildings.
  - Existing zoning setback.
  - Have provisions been made to allow deviations.
- Activities: parking, buildings.
  - Confirm limitations for parking setbacks and activities.
- Lighting, security.
  - Do retail outlets also require the same security?

- Locations of permitted zones for retail: Rural Center, Rural Village, Camano Gateway Village.
  - Add Rural Service.
  - Discussed the locations the City of Oak Harbor has limited retail to.
- Discussed the definitions section added to the ordinance.
- Change single family residence to residences.

Dean Enell wanted to make sure there is a strong attempt to maintain lighting ordinance.

- Discussion between lighting, screening and public safety.

*Commissioner Wallin moved to continue the workshop to February 25, 2014, Commissioner Yonkman seconded, motion carried unanimously.*

Meeting adjourned at 12:20p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Shaddy